(b) and (c) The Central Govt. had noted the increasing trend of Govt. doctors especially the Specialists seeking Voluntary Retirement or Resigning due to the attractive financial Compensation and other generous service benefits in foreign assignments/domestic private sector. The Govt. had constituted an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Javid Choudhury, former Secretary (Health) to suggest measures/disincentives that should be introduced to arrest the outflow of doctors and changes in the terms and conditions of service. The Committee has made a number of recommendations to improve the lot of these doctors. Amongst the steps taken by the Government (i) the age of retirement of specialists in the three sub-cadres of Teaching, Non-teaching and Public Health has already been increased from 60 to 62 years (ii) the period of study leave has also been increased from two years to three years in respect of CHS doctors.

Snake bites and deaths

2707. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that annually over 50,000 people in the country die after bitten by snakes;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering any national policy on treating snake bites and also to ensure fast and effective use of anti venom besides making it available to health care centres in backward villages; and

(c) if so, the salient features of the Policy thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) As per available information, received from Directorates of Health Services of States/UTs, the number of deaths reported due to snakebite in the country, year-wise for the last three years is 1423 in the year 2004, 1502 in 2005 and 1114 in 2006.

(b) and (c) The treatment protocol for Snakebites is being finalized. The information regarding protocol would be widely disseminated to all stakeholders, including State Governments for effective treatment.

Since Health is a State subject, the State Government is primarily responsible to ensure availability of anti-snake venom drugs/vaccines in health care centres of the respective States.

Diabetes a global problem

2708. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fart that diabetes have become a global problem;

(b) if so, whether there is any national policy on the treatment, prevention and care of diabetic patients; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Diabetes is one of the most common non-communicable diseases globally. According to International Diabetes Federation, 256 million people have diabetes worldwide.

A National Programme for Prevention and Control of Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke is contemplated during the Eleventh Five Year Plan with focus on increasing public awareness. The pilot phase of this Programme has been initiated in six States in the current year.

Vacancies of ward-boys

2709. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of ward-boys sanctioned in Safdarjung Hospital, ward-wise and how many of them are vacant;

(b) what are the duties assigned to the ward-boys and whether they are performing those duties properly and if not, what steps have been taken to ensure the performing of duties by them;

(c) how many complaints have received against the misbehaviour of the ward-boys including harassing the lady patients and what action has been taken in those cases; and

(d) whether any uniform has been prescribed for these ward-boys and if so, whether they are wearing the uniforms and if not, what steps are proposed to be taken to ensure wearing of the uniform by ward-boys?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (d) In Safdarjung Hospital, 603 post of Nursing Attendants (also known as ward-boy) are sanctioned of which 94 posts are presently vacant. Duties of Nursing Attendants include cleaning and dusting of beds, doors, windows, walls and other furniture in the ward and Side Rooms, washing of sinks, wash basins; making up empty beds or beds of ambulant patients, to transport patients to various departments, helping in the distribution of food to the patients; to attend to other departments such as Blood Bank, Laboratory, counting of linen to be sent to and received back from the hospital laundry; assistance to the Medical and Nursing Staff; any other job as required by the senior staff of the ward. Any negligence of duty by them is dealt as per CCS (CCA) (Central Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1965). No case of misbehavior/harassing of lady patient by any Nursing Attendant in Sadarjung Hospital has been reported in the last two years. There is a prescribed uniform for Nursing Attendants which they have to wear while on duty. Wearing of uniform is ensured through periodical monitoring by Senior staff in wards.

Rates for diagnosis

2710. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rate fixed by CGHS for various tests and diagnosis are very low in comparison with actual costs;